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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
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МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АМНИСТИЯ
منظمة العفو الدولية
國際特赦組織

URGENT ACTION

EXTERNAL **AI Index: ASA 21/01/97**

UA 06/97 **Fear of torture** **8 January 1997**

EAST TIMOR

Baltasar SH Belo, 20
Jose Maria Geronimo, 32
João Budiono C Moraes, 19
Gregorio Sequira Bento, 16
Luis Afonso, 22
Abel Fernandes, 27
Armando C Soares, 18
Bobby Xavier, 23

At least eight, and possibly 13, East Timorese men have been arrested in the aftermath of two violent incidents in the East Timorese capital Dili following the return to East Timor of Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Bishop Carlos Belo, on 24 December 1996. Amnesty International fears that the detainees may be tortured or ill-treated in custody.

Tens of thousands of people reportedly gathered at Dili airport to welcome Bishop Belo on 24 December. On his arrival a fight broke out between some East Timorese and a man in plainclothes who was suspected of being an intelligence officer with the security forces. The man was beaten and the crowd are believed to have damaged a car in which he was trying to escape.

Bishop Belo then travelled to Dili's cathedral to give a mass. It is believed that at least one person, an East Timorese member of the Indonesian Armed Forces, Corporal Alfredo de Santo Siga, was killed by the crowd outside the cathedral who became angry at the presence of armed security forces. At least 11 other people were reportedly injured during the confrontation. Bishop Belo has condemned the killing of the Corporal.

The police in East Timor claim that they have arrested 13 people in connection with the disturbances, but that more arrests are anticipated as their investigations continue. The 13 are alleged by the police to have committed acts of mass destruction, assault and murder, but no names have been publicly released by the police. Amnesty International has received the names of only eight in detention, but human rights activists have expressed concern that at least eight other men are being sought by the authorities.

Baltasar SH Belo was arrested on 26 December and is believed to be held at Police Resort in Dili. Jose Maria Geronimo, João Budiono C Moraes and Gregorio Sequira Bento were all arrested on 27 December and are believed to be detained at Regional Police Headquarters (*Polda*) in Dili. Luis Afonso was arrested on 28 December and is also detained at *Polda*. Abel Fernandes and Bobby Xavier were both arrested on 29 December and are being held at *Polda*. Armando C Soares was arrested on 30 December and is believed to be in either Mobile Police or military custody.

There is no information about the precise reasons for the arrest of the eight. Amnesty International believes that they are being denied full access to independent legal counsel, placing them at risk of torture or ill-treatment. Fears for these particular detainees are heightened because of the routine use of torture and ill-treatment by the security forces in attempting to extract confessions for alleged crimes or information about the activities of others.

United States Congressman, Patrick Kennedy, who travelled to East Timor with Bishop Belo, has publicly expressed his concern that the arrests and intimidation by the security forces following the two incidents on 24 December have deliberately targeted peaceful supporters of Bishop Belo.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

East Timorese taken into military and police custody continue to be at risk of torture and ill-treatment, particularly during interrogation. Safeguards against the use of torture and other violations of detainees' rights, provided for under Indonesia's Code of Criminal Procedures, are more often than not ignored by the military and police. Detainees are denied access to legal counsel and their families, placing them at risk of torture and ill-treatment.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express/airmail letters in English or Bahasa Indonesia or your own language:
- calling for all those detained in connection with the events of 24 December 1996 to be granted full and immediate access to independent legal counsel and family members;
- calling for the authorities to provide clarification of the exact whereabouts of all those detained and the charges under which they are being held;
- calling for the release of anyone who is being held solely for the non-violent expression of their political beliefs.

APPEALS TO:

CHIEF OF POLICE FOR EAST TIMOR
Colonel Yusuf Muharram
Kapolda Timor Timor
Dili, East Timor (Indonesia)
Telegrams: Kapolda, Dili, East Timor
Salutation: Dear Colonel

MILITARY COMMANDER REGION IX/UDAYANA
(covers Bali, Lombok, Nusa Tenggara and East Timor)
Maj Gen Rivai
Pangdam IX/Udayana
Markas Besar KODAM IX/Udayana
Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
Telegrams: Pangdam IX, Udayana, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
Salutation: Dear Major General

COPIES TO:

NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Komisi Nasional Hak Asazi Manusia (Komnas HAM)
Alex Refialy SO
Jalan Dr Antonio de Carvelho
Dili
East Timor
(Indonesia)

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Ali Alatas S.H.
Menteri Luar Negeri
Jl. Medan Taman Pejambon No.6
Jakarta
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and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 25 February 1997.